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RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN ZIMBABWE'S
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INTRODUCTION

"A tenure is simply a bundle of rights, . . . , rights to use land, trees and their products in certain ways and sometimes to exclude others" Bruce and Fortmann (1988:2). It can also be appropriately added to this definition that a system of tenure rules is both determined by the production process it seeks to regulate and also has a definitive bearing on that process of production. Moreover, a system of tenure rules can be imposed on a mode of production to suit "external" interests rather than those of the people engaged in it. This, it is contended here, is precisely what has historically happened to the "communal" system of land tenure in Zimbabwe's "communal" areas (C.As).

The designation "communal" with reference to the tenure system operating in Zimbabwe's "communal" lands is at once perplexing and inappropriate. Recent historical work suggests that this system of tenure was instituted, in an ideological and political process, to suit the interests of colonial capital. Furthermore, the colonial conceptualisation of "communal" tenure has been carried over into post-colonial Zimbabwe (Ranger:1985,1988: Cheater: 1989,1990). Given the paucity of empirical research into the internal dynamics of the tenure system in the "peasant" mode of production in both pre and post-colonial Zimbabwe, the official definition, and hence the legislation regarding the "communal" land tenure system, has tended to be a normative reflection of ideological and political concerns rather than a reflection of what actually is taking place in the tenure system under consideration.

The extant in land tenure and rural development discourse assumes that the "communal" land tenure system prevailing in Zimbabwe's C.As is a static institution and that those people whose livelihood is based on a production process governed by this tenure system are not constantly redefining their rights, duties obligations and strategies with respect to the land, its resources and to each other. It is further assumed that what differentiation exists among the "peasantry" is so minimal as to be insignificant to the process of production. (vide e.g. Moyana:1984). These static "models" ignore the changes that are constantly occurring in the production process in response to changes in the political and economic environment, technological advances, demographic dynamics etc. all of which impact both the production process and the tenure system which regulates it.

The dynamic nature of any mode of production makes it difficult to envisage a static system of rights in the most fundamental force of production - land. Land tenure is, ergo, a dynamic institution in a constant state of flux and, ergo, people's strategies, actions and goals in an agrarian system of production regarding the resources governed by a particular set of tenure rules are also in a constant state of flux.

In this paper, I argue that the system of tenure obtaining in Zimbabwe's C.As is little understood. Not much empirical research has been undertaken to challenge the prevailing notions about this tenure system albeit evidence exists to suggest that some elements of a system of rights corresponding to freehold and private individualised tenure occur in this "communal" tenure system. My view is that changes are constantly occurring in the tenure rules governing the system and hence people's rights and obligations regarding common property resources (CPRs) are in a concomitant state of flux. Hence the policy solutions for the sustainable utilization of CPRs necessarily has to be based on a recognition and understanding of the historical nature of the changes that are taking place in the tenure system, incorporate those aspects of locally evolved strategies and actions that have a positive impact on CPRs generally, and have a dynamic orientation based on the recognition that the policy solutions will themselves comprise the basis for a new sequence of mutations in the tenure system.

"Communal" Land Tenure: Towards a Definition of the Existing tenure System in the C.A.s.

There is considerable debate in the literature pertaining to a precise definition of "communal" land tenure. The absence of common ground among land tenure analysts, sociologists, anthropologists and historians alike bears testimony to the complexities of this tenure system and hence points to the pertinent need for policy to be informed by specifications of the distinguishing features of the tenure system in question. It is essential, in the search for policy solutions to the problems of resource degradation in the C.As, to consider and define the tenure system operating in these areas as it is ultimately this system that defines the nature of the relationships that come into existence among people regarding their utilization of CPRs and thus circumscribes the micro-politics of CPR utilization and management. The prevailing tenure rules, since they would also have definitive ramifications for the success of policy solutions on CPR management, would also need to be incorporated into those solutions.

A "tenure" is simply a bundle of rights to use the land and its products, by a clearly defined individual or group of individuals, possibly to the exclusion of others. "Conventional" tenure systems include "leasehold", "freehold" and "communal" or "traditional" tenure. Tenure systems are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and sometimes do co-exist within the same production system. As Bruce and Fortmann (1989:2) assert, "...it is not at all unusual for a village to have a certain tenure over a piece of land, while an individual or family has tenure over part of the same land, and the state asserts a residual title in the same land."

The structure of agricultural production in Zimbabwe is

characterised by the existence of four distinct types of land tenure and farming systems. Large scale commercial farming areas (formerly European Areas) occupy 39% of the land and comprise extensive holdings under an individual freehold system, with an average holding size of 3 000 hectares. Small scale commercial farming areas (formerly African Purchase Areas), account for 4% of total land area and contain 113 000 smallholders on farms of 80 to 200 hectares also under a freehold system. Resettlement areas, introduced in 1980 to reallocate land formerly in the large scale commercial sector, also occupy 4% of the land. The government holds title to this land and extends annually renewable permits to settlers. The issue of tenure in the resettlement areas is still to be resolved. The "communal" areas cover 42% of the land and cater for about 55% of the population on individual arable holdings of between 2 and 4 hectares. However, vast differences in land holding size are beginning to emerge in the C.As in a process of accumulation and differentiation (vide e.g. Jackson et al 1987; Amin and Chipika 1990). "Key resources" such as grazing, forests and forest products, water etc are communally held.

I am, in this paper, concerned only with the "communal" tenure system and the implications that this system of tenure, in its current form, has on the management and utilization of common property resources in the C.As and thus I turn, in the next section, to a definition of the "communal" system of land tenure obtaining in these C.As.

Bruce (1986) asserts that:

"Communal tenure has been used to cover at least three quite different situations. First, it may refer to a common ownership which implies common exploitation and management. Indigenous land tenure in Africa is communal in this sense only in exceptional cases. . . . Second, the term may refer to the right of members of a group to each use independently the full extent of certain land of the group, a right of commons. This is often the case with grazing land or areas for hunting and collection of firewood, but is not the situation as regards arable land, even under conditions of shifting cultivation. Third, the term may refer to significant group control, reflecting some group interest over land apportioned for the relative exclusive use of the group. The group may be an extended family, a lineage, a clan, a village or a tribe. It is usually defined by common descent, common residence or some combination of these two principles. The group's interest may be framed as a property right or couched in political or administrative terms. (my emphasis).

For Bruce, it is only in the last sense that indigenous tenure in farmland is communal. Now, the question we must ask is whether Bruce's typology is typical of the tenure system in the C.As of Zimbabwe.

✓ For Parsons (1971:16); "A system of land tenure rules defines both the opportunity to earn income from agriculture and the security of that opportunity. The tenure rules define the rights and duties of people to each other, with respect to the land". Tenure systems are by definition dynamic. Changes in land tenure systems can be brought about by economic changes such as the introduction of cash crops, increases in population density, urbanization, increased demand for food, investments in land such as the introduction of tree crops etc.

Recent historical work (Cheater 1989,1990; Ranger 1985,1988) suggests that the current "official" definition of the "communal" land tenure system in Zimbabwe is both a political and ideological conceptualization designed to suit the interests of the ruling classes. Cheater (1989:1) maintains that due to the centrality of land to the politics of both colonial and post colonial Zimbabwe:

"[It] is not surprising that land tenure, more especially the racial division of land, was ideologized by both land-grabbing colonizers and those whose struggle against colonization was ultimately successful. Given this ideologisation of land, it is unsurprising that there has been little detailed investigation into landholding practices, especially in the so-called "communal" or "tribal" areas."

For Ranger (1988:3):

"The idea ... and to some extent the practice - of "traditional communal tenure" grew in a sort of rural power vacuum during early colonialism. Chiefs had lost power over land and no-one else had assumed it; the colonial authorities were content to leave emergent peasant production to itself; there was no shortage of land as people spread out from the old centralised villages; and people essentially allocated land to themselves by moving into it during the great process of peasant resettlement of the countryside. Thereafter, in these new peasant communities, land allocation was basically local and consensual, at least until the interventions of the colonial state from 1920 onwards" (my emphasis).

The manner of both these arguments is to disprove the existence in Zimbabwe of a "communal" tenure system corresponding to any of Bruce's situations of communal tenure. That a communal system of tenure involving group control over land did in fact exist in pre-colonial times is beyond doubt. However, the advent of colonialism also saw the demise of such a land tenure system as colonial capital sought to gain control over land and institute a system of agricultural production whose success depended on the supremacy of settler production and the creation of labour reserves in the newly created "Tribal Trust Lands" (vide e.g. Arrighi 1970). It is also beyond doubt that the control of arable

land was individual in the pre colonial land tenure system, with significant group control being exercised only in CPRs.

While it is not Ranger's purpose to deal with the historical trajectory of the tenure system in question, and as such he pays only peripheral attention to the fate of the "communal" land tenure system after the interventions of the colonial state in the 1920s, a great deal of the material he collected is of relevance to the deductions subsequently made about the evolution of the "communal" system of tenure in colonial Zimbabwe. On the other hand, Cheater, who specifically sets out to investigate the land holding practices in the "communal" areas, comes to the conclusion that the idea of communal tenure is a normative and ideological concept that does not correspond to the de facto land holding practices among the Zimbabwean peasantry. The state and its people thus have different constructs of land tenure and the land tenure system. Herein lie the origins of the problems of CPR management, as shall be demonstrated in a later section.

I turn now to a brief discussion of the historical development of the "communal" system of land tenure in Zimbabwe and attempt to demonstrate how the "official" normative constructions of landholding on the one hand and the de facto landholding practices on the other have historically affected natural resource use and conservation and the implications of this dynamic for agrarian reform and sustainable CPR utilization and management in the C.As.

The Historical Trajectory of "communal" Land Tenure in Zimbabwe

Ranger (1985) sets out to demonstrate that the Zimbabwean peasantry consciously adopted the "peasant option" in apparent preference to labour migration into the colonial wage labour system. Throughout the colonial period, legislation was promulgated which was aimed at creating a conducive climate for the operation of colonial capital by driving the peasants off the land into the wage labour system, thereby achieving the dual objective of protecting settler agriculture at the same time as a large reserve army of labour was created for the nascent industry (vide Arrighi 1970). The present dual and inequitable land distribution bears testimony to this process.

The peasants resisted the efforts of the colonial state to undermine their production system through a variety of strategies ranging from increasing their output by bringing more land under production in response to increased taxes, to subverting settler agriculture by grazing their stock on "European" land. It was in this context that the colonial construct of a "communal" land tenure system came into existence.

The colonial model of communal tenure, to which some nationalist historians and analysts subscribe (see Cheater 1989), and which has been carried over into independence virtually intact, maintained that the distinguishing attributes of this tenure

system as it operated in the newly created Reserves were:

1. Land rights are vested in a corporate group which has overriding rights over those of the individual. The land is held in trust by some representative of the group (usually the chief, the headman or lineage head) who is also responsible for allocating land to individuals within that group for specific uses.

2. Land rights are inalienable and to that extent land is only a use-value. As Moyana (1984:13) states: "No member of a group could sell or transfer land to an outsider as land was considered a natural endowment in the same category as rain, sunlight and the air we breathe".

3. Women do not, in their own right, have rights to land. Primary usufruct rights go to married men and women only have secondary rights of usufruct either by virtue of their marriage or their membership of the patrilineage.

4. Since land is only a use-value, and therefore has no exchange value, there is no market in land.

This model of communal tenure is based on the assumptions that:

1. Communal tenure operates in a system of shifting cultivation and, by implication, land abundance. However, there is a dearth of evidence which would suggest the existence of a system of shifting cultivation in Zimbabwe immediately before the advent of colonialism. As Wilson and Scoones (1989:33) point out "[At] least in southern Shona areas, the dominant farming system in the 19th century was not shifting cultivation at all; rather it was a system of intensive continuous farming of vleis areas". Moreover, legislated colonial expropriation and centralization, resulting as it did in the increasing concentration of people in progressively smaller and fragile ecosystems, as well as the vesting of allocative powers in state agents, have had the cumulative effect of obliterating the last vestiges of shifting cultivation, at least in all areas outside of the Zambezi valley.

In the Zambezi valley shifting cultivation continues to be practised, albeit on a very limited scale. There is evidence to suggest that shifting cultivation among the Tonga of the Zambezi valley is a direct result of the construction of Lake Kariba which resulted in their relocation from the fertile alluvial plain of the river valley where the Tonga had engaged in very successful tillage of the river valley, to the dry and tsetse fly infested higher ground where, because of their relatively unsophisticated tools and methods, the difficulties of accumulating capital and investing in agricultural production, distance from the markets and colonial neglect, the Tonga have been forced into shifting cultivation.

2. A second and equally erroneous tenet of the colonial model is that "communal" land tenure is oriented towards subsistence production. Numerous examples can be adduced to show that even in pre-colonial times the production of an agricultural surplus, and hence a market orientation, already existed. Studies have demonstrated that extensive agricultural trade existed in grain and tobacco in pre-colonial Zimbabwe. Capital accumulation, primarily in the form of cattle, was an important feature of the commoditization of iron tools in the pre-colonial era. Cheater (1989) points to the existence of the term hurudza in chiShona (meaning one who produces an agricultural surplus) as further evidence of the early market orientation.

Arising out of this assumption of a subsistence orientation is the further assumption that, therefore, peasant society is relatively undifferentiated. Ranger (1985) demonstrates that the emergence of a plough owning rural entrepreneurial class during early colonialism only exacerbated existing differentiation among the peasantry, it did not signify its beginnings. Thus rural differentiation is not necessarily a product of colonial capital, it pre-dates it.

3. Thirdly, it is assumed that since land is inalienable by virtue of its being a use-value only, the acquisition of usufruct rights is based on allocations made to the individual by some representative of the group.

Ranger's (1985) work suggests the self allocation and individual selection of fertile land in proximity to transport routes rather than allocation by the group.

Arguing against the "mythology of chiefly allocation of... land" Wilson and Scoones (1989:82-3) cite two problems with this model, namely that: "...even the existence of defined chiefly and ward territories does not actually date from the pre-colonial era,...it seems likely that chiefly control over land allocation evolved during the colonial era as a substitute for direct political power". And, secondly, the model "...does not explain the actual patterns of land access even during the colonial era. What actually existed was an on-going struggle to control land access between different categories of chiefs, commoner lineages, individual farmers and the state".

Several other studies have also noted different types of transactions in rights of usufruct, including cash payments, starting during the colonial era. Bourdillon (1982) states that

"... even when the old ideas about land are not completely forgotten .. means have been found according to which land can be bought and sold: initially the original user could demand compensation for the work of clearing and preparing farmland. but as land becomes more scarce, value for the land itself is added to the compensation fee, and chiefs and headmen can charge settlers a fee for the allocation of land. Now, in

crowded areas, people expect to pay even for the allocation of a residential plot - as much as \$70 near Salisbury".

Other studies have identified a variety of payments for rights to "communal" land ranging from compensation payments etc. (Holleman 1969); cash payments for permanent improvements to the land - such as houses, orchards, wells etc. - as well as for the land itself by both the colonial and post colonial governments to people moved under resettlement, construction, irrigation and other programmes (Cheater 1989; Scudder 1966), to suggestions by the representatives of the peasant communities - both pre and post-colonial - of collective willingness to purchase land in order to secure permanent title to it (Cheater 1989:9; Ranger 1985:337).

The involvement of the state in these transactions in allegedly inalienable "communal" land imputes some legality to this fact. In fact, legislation does exist to regulate transactions in communal land. The Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951 was in part aimed at instituting some form of individual ownership of communal land. Under this Act, numerous rights to both arable and grazing land were allocated to individuals. Transactions in these rights were allowed and did occur. As Holleman (1969) notes; by 1963 over 700 arable rights and grazing rights for 19 600 livestock had been sold to new individual owners. (adapted from Cheater 1989:11). Cheater (1989:10) also states that "...under the 1967 Tribal Trust Land and 1969 Land Tenure Acts, the colonial government recognised [the] principle of compensation, by paying cash compensation for communal land, as well as improvements to it, ...This has remained the policy of Zimbabwe's independent governments, which have also extended (in the Communal Land Act of 1982) the application of parts 1 and 4 of the Land Acquisition Act of 1970 (which was not originally applicable to communal land)..." She proceeds to point out that "...the longer term effects of three and a half decades of the legalised sale of "communal" arable and grazing rights, is never taken into account in discourses about the land in the present, even though all subsequent legislation has continued to recognise the individualised, heritable rights granted under the NLHA" (1989:11). Other observers have commented on the trajectory of the land tenure system as influenced by colonial legislation. Scoones and Wilson (1989:84), for instance, observe that: "[However]. ...the actual patterns of ownership and access have once more developed into a variant of patrilineal control."

Under the Customary Law and Local Courts Act of 1990, which is aimed at restoring some of the chiefs' powers, chiefs and headmen will preside over local customary courts with jurisdiction over civil matters. The local courts will not, however, have any jurisdiction over land issues, these matters will only be dealt with by magistrates or higher courts. (The Herald 8-2-90). The Communal Land Act 1982 also vests the power to allocate land with the District Councils rather than with any representative of the group. The "communal" tenure model being considered here assumes

that allocative power is vested with some representative of the group rather than with a state agent, as is clearly the case in Zimbabwe.

The foregoing section points to the contradiction that exists between the "normative" definition of "communal" land tenure and the de facto land holding practices in the C.As. It is my contention that these contradictions point to the need for new approaches to land tenure analysis that take as their point of departure incisive studies into the dynamics of the tenure system prevailing in the C.As and suggest policy solutions that take cognisance of the strategies already being adopted by the peasantry to deal with the incentives and dis-incentives of their system of production. There should be a shift from policy solutions to the "problems of communal land tenure" that are instructed by normative notions of what should be happening in that tenure system as opposed to what actually is happening. I shall address this issue later in the context of sustainable CPR utilization in the C.As.

The point to be made here though is that it is quite clear that the relations of production in the C.As are changing. These changes have also led to tenure changes in the direction of more individualised access, not only to arable land (which is individually controlled in most communal tenure systems anyway), but also to include hitherto communally owned resources. What then, is the precise nature of these tenure changes and what implications do they have for the political economy of the C.As generally and on CPR management in particular?

Since independence in 1980, a number of studies have attempted to describe the changes that are occurring in the C.As in the contexts of access to credit facilities, extension services and markets (Truscott 1983; Bratton 1988); rural proletarianization (Adams 1987); investment of remittances from off-farm income into agricultural production (Weiner and Harris 1989; Jackson et al 1987; Spiegel 1981); access to variable and constant capital (Amin and Chipika 1990; Cousins 1987; 1989a); the political economy of hunger (Shopo 1985). These studies generally indicate that a process of differentiation is taking place in the communal areas and that the current high levels of production can be attributed to only the top 20% of rural households (the rich peasantry), who produce in excess of 80% of total C.As agricultural output. These rich peasants have access to off-farm income, cattle, implements and have more land than the poor peasants. Differentiation and access to off farm income also poses a problematic for the definition of a peasantry (vide Cousins 1990 for a fuller discussion). This process of differentiation obviously has profound implications for agrarian reform in Zimbabwe after the expiration of the Lancaster constitution, and for the productivity of the C.As generally (vide Cousins 1990; Amin 1990).

While these studies offer useful descriptive insights into the dynamic political economy of the communal areas and also dispel

the myth of homogeneity therein, they do not constitute an analytical framework by which the nature of the changes occurring in the C.As can be conceptualised and policy solutions for the "problems of communal tenure" conceived. They do, however, constitute the basis upon which broad generalizations about the nature of the process of production and the mutating relations of production in the C.As can be made and the static "communal" tenure model questioned. The need for such an analytical framework is thus obvious.

I turn now, in the next section, to an historical assessment and discussion of the political economy of resource degradation in the "communal" areas.

The Political Economy of Common Property Resource Degradation in the "Communal" Areas: An Historical Assessment.

That the "communal" system of land tenure has been indicted for resource degradation in the so called "communal" areas of Zimbabwe is in fact an artifact of the inability or unwillingness of successive administrations, both colonial and post - colonial, to take cognisance of the internal dynamics of the tenure system and its evolving and sometimes antagonistic articulation into the rest of the economy.

In considering the question of resource degradation in the C.As, it is imperative to first distinguish the resources in question and specify the tenure regime(s) governing the utilization of these resources. Only then can one conclude with any certainty that degradation of that resource is or is not a tenure problem, and thus prescribe appropriate solutions. My concern here is with common property resources, i.e. resources access to which is predicated on membership of a group and utilization of which (and hence exclusion from access) is collectively governed by the group. The foregoing sections have demonstrated that arable land is decidedly not part of the CPR regime.

In this connection then, the crucial question to ask is whether or not there is a contradiction in a tenure system in which arable land is not part of the CPR regime to the extent that individual, even if not strictly private - though increasingly corresponding to it somewhat - tenure of land is recognised, and communal tenure regimes govern access to all other resources which are vitally important to the operation of the whole production process of the C.As.

My contention is that there is a contradiction but that this contradiction is not typical of Hardin's "tragedy of the commons" which results from the irrational exploitation of CPRs because the benefits of resultant degradation are greater than the costs. Rather, the contradiction arises precisely out of the failure by the state to take full cognisance of the internal dynamics of the tenure system, particularly as regards the regulation of CPRs. This has led to the institution of legal and administrative

constraints to the development of appropriate CPR management institutions at the local level, which in turn has resulted in the relatively unregulated utilization of CPRs and inevitably culminated in degradation. The misinterpretation of the basic causes of resource degradation has led to the prescription of inappropriate solutions in the past.

To develop this line of argument, it is necessary to first outline the nature of CPR degradation as it has historically occurred and the policy reactions to the phenomenon. From this, alternative analyses of the problems will emerge and perhaps a process of searching for alternative and radical policy solutions will begin. Since my own analysis is not based on any considerable amount of fieldwork, it should be considered only as the basis for discussing the need for new and relevant policy directions, rather than as constituting a basis for such policy directions.

Of the "communal" land under cultivation, a large proportion is in areas that are either unsuitable for cultivation at all or for the crops being cultivated. Only 25% of "communal" land is suitable for intensive cultivation. Persistent overgrazing, especially by domestic livestock, in combination with "incorrect land husbandry practices", have allegedly impoverished extensive areas of the C.As. The same processes are said to be solely responsible for heavy stock and wildlife losses, particularly in dry years.

Land in the C.As is extensively used for grazing domestic stock, particularly cattle. Capital accumulation primarily takes the form of cattle, albeit significant investments are also made in other forms of constant capital such as ox-drawn implements, fencing, tractors etc. Capital accumulation is an important dimension of rural differentiation. A large proportion of the communal rangelands is now severely downgraded, a situation which has also led to serious soil loss and to the siltation of rivers and dams. This is a very recent phenomenon, dating back to the creation of Reserves and the concentration of people on marginal land.

The degradation of rangelands is primarily a consequence of the expansion of arable agriculture into areas previously designated grazing land. This arable expansion was the inevitable consequence of the adoption of the "peasant option" and the colonial attempts to degrade the viability of this option. As Ranger (1985:36) observes with reference to Makoni Reserve;

"Taxes were increased and grain prices fell; there were droughts and famines as well as good years - but the response of the ...peasants to every eventuality was always the same. They increased the cultivated area. By the end of the 1920s this process had almost reached its limit and it was reported that 'the number of cattle in the reserves is becoming too large as so much of the land is under cultivation'. ...peasants responded to the depression year of 1930 by yet further

extensions of their land [into designated grazing areas]."

It was only in the 1930s that the colonial government started paying any attention to the conservation problems of the Reserves. This represented a shift from a prior preoccupation with white farming as a source of soil erosion etc. The colonial government's perception of the soil erosion problem in the Reserves was that it resulted from the use of the plough and the opening up of new land by the nascent class of "plough-owning entrepreneurs". The policy solution was "centralization" which was applied to oust this new entrepreneurial class and to eventually drive them out of the Reserves system altogether. As Ranger (1985:72) has pointed out:

"Originally designed as a conservation measure pure and simple, by which a division was made between exclusively arable and exclusively grazing land, 'centralization' became a means of redistribution of lands in the Reserves...the reason advanced [for centralization by the Assistant Agriculturalist in 1938] was the activity of the plough-owning maize growers" Ranger (1985:721).

However, the peasants had a quite different perception of the problem, one based on their experiences of the colonial land policy and their reactions to it. This led to a crisis in which the peasants would not implement the conservation measures of the colonial state and continued to use grazing land for arable purposes.

"Indeed, much of the tension between black peasants and white administrators in the 1930s and 1940s arose from their quite different perceptions of the nature of the crisis in African Agriculture. Peasants saw it as a crisis brought about by low prices, government intervention in marketing, the increasing diversion of labour into conservation works etc. Government saw the crisis in terms of bad African methods threatening a collapse of the productivity of the soil" Ranger (1985:36).

Government attempts to undermine large rural entrepreneurs continued with the promulgation of the Native Land Husbandry Act in 1951. This Act is often regarded as having introduced the potential for capital accumulation in the Reserves by providing for individual tenure. However, its implementation had the effect of yet another equalization of landholdings (vide Ranger 1985). Needless to say, the conservation measures of the NLHA were resisted by the peasantry for the same reasons as the "centralization" programme, notably that "provision for conservation works, for fallowing and for limiting livestock numbers meant taking out of production land that was already not enough to guarantee even subsistence needs..." Cliffe (1986:52).

After the end of the second World War, colonial agriculture in Zimbabwe became profitable for the first time in history. This necessitated the implementation of Land Tenure Act (LTA) and led to mass evictions of African "squatters" from "European" land unless they entered into labour agreements with the white farmers. Again preference was for the "peasant option". The result was a dramatic increase in the human and livestock population of the Reserves and a concomitant and inevitable rise in the rate and extent of resource degradation in the Reserves. To illustrate this point, consider the following example from Ranger's study of the Tanda Reserve:

"It had been estimated (by the Land Inspectorate) that 15% of Tanda was arable land, 75% grazing land, and 10% waste land; it had thus been recommended that not more than 200 families be resettled in this Reserve. As a result of the implementation of the LTA; "[In] fact 619 families were moved into the area between 1945 and 1947 as there was nowhere else for them to go; many more followed in the next few years....By the early 1960s there was a population of 7 350 with 7 000 cattle. The result was as the land inspector had predicted. In the period 1945 to 1947 virgin lands provided yields of 20 to 40 bags of maize per acre in the first year, but once ploughed the rains washed away the finer and more fertile particles of clay, silt and humus. Within four years output dropped to 2 to 5 bags per acre" Ranger (1985:147).

The NLHA, with its provisions for intensive conservation works - drain strips, gully dams, contour ridges, rotational grazing etc. - was introduced against this background. The peasants bitterly resented these measures which they saw (and quite correctly too) as a waste of labour in conservation works which did nothing to increase the productivity of the soil. They also resented having to give up the insurance against famine offered by wet gardens.

Thus resource degradation in the C.As, principally the degradation of grazing land due to arable expansion, but also, by extension, the degradation of forests (since clearing forests for arable production is the single most important factor in deforestation) and hence of wildlife by the destruction of habitat, were the inevitable results of the inequitable distribution of land and the colonial administrative perception of the problem as being essentially a tenure problem, and their failure to prescribe appropriate solutions, i.e. land redistribution. In the light of the foregoing brief historical outline, it becomes evident that CPR degradation in the C.As is, ergo, a socio-economic, political and ecological process rather than an artifact of the 'communal' land tenure system.

Arable expansion into grazing has continued almost unabated in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The resettlement programme, having managed to settle only 40 000 households out of a targeted 162 000 by 1984, has obviously not significantly relieved land

pressure in the CAs especially when one considers that employment in the non-agricultural sector has not increased at all while the population has grown at an annual rate of around 2,9%. A more extensive discussion of the resettlement programme is not the objective of this paper, and has already been presented in other work (vide e.g. Moyo 1990).

Proposing an economic cost and benefit analysis for arable expansion into grazing, Scoones and Wilson (1989) observe that such expansion has tended to be more rapid in the overpopulated high potential areas in natural regions 11 and 111, and in the areas of spontaneous resettlement in the north (the Zambezi Valley). In these areas, returns on opening up of arable land will probably remain higher than the costs of reduced grazing. Scoones and Wilson also observe that enclosure of common grazing land is occurring on a mostly small scale around homesteads and sometimes around areas of old abandoned fields. "Enclosure of grazing adjacent to or around homesteads and fields will increase the trend towards the creation of integrated 'small-holdings' along the lines of highland Kenya".

Scoones and Wilson cite four principal ways in which the "invasion of the commons" is occurring:

1. The incorporation of lands adjacent to existing holdings, drainage and path lines in a continuation of uciro (an ideology of individual freedom to counter colonial technocratic control, that came into existence during the liberation war). "This expansion is mainly done by resource rich farmers, for whom arable land is a severe production constraint".

2. The opening up of new fields in the grazing area, usually by young men who cannot wait for their inheritance of land or whose existing inheritances are too small, sometimes with the local authority's (sabhuku, chief, VIDCO chairman, councillor etc) illegal authority.

3. Direct "squatting" by outsiders on grazing land with some local permission for which illegal payments are sometimes made. "There may often be resentment by local people, but again it seems that the right to survive - even at common cost or cost to another community - is powerfully recognised".

4. A feature of sandy soil areas under population pressure is expansion into grazing land through homefields around the homestead. "Such homefields tend to be more productive than most 'outfields,' [because they enable the application of fertility inputs without transport problems and the benefits of homestead litter may also be considerable] and it is noticeable that most of the really productive farmers have managed to obtain homefields...Attempts to destroy homefields use, or to villagise people, will therefore have a negative effect on productivity" Scoones and Wilson (1989:85-7).

The enclosure of CPRs is significant to note here. It points to

the development in the "communal" tenure dynamic of a definite trend towards individualised tenure of all the resources essential to the production process. It is also significant to note that this trend is occurring only in the higher potential areas, this has obvious implications for land reform, as shall be demonstrated in a later section.

The post colonial government has basically inherited the colonial ideology and most of the legislation for "communal" land tenure. Consequently, resource degradation in the C.As continues to be blamed on the tenure system (vide e.g. Chavunduka Commission, Chitsike Commission). These Commissions' policy solutions, together with the National Conservation Strategy from which most current natural resource management programmes draw their inspiration, emanate from apolitical and ahistorical analyses of the resource problems of the C.As. Consequently, the de facto system of land tenure in the so called communal areas is not defined, the dynamics of this system are not even questioned and the colonial ideology is accepted. Rather, these programmes simply seek to blame the problems of resource management and degradation in the C.As on the communal tenure system. This approach is decidedly superficial, and hence the policy solutions thus prescribed are often inadequate or inappropriate, and resource degradation continues almost unabated in the C.As.

One such programme that shall be dealt with in this context is the Communal Areas Management Programme For Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Martin (1984:iv) writes in his summary of the programme that:

"The CAMPFIRE programme has been designed to address the problem of communally owned natural resources Communal ownership is an entirely appropriate system where resources are plentiful. ... However, the stage has been reached in the communal areas of Zimbabwe where changes are rapidly becoming manifest and natural resources are declining because of a failure to evolve new systems of land tenure...." (my emphasis).

This clearly is an indictment of the "communal" land tenure system. That such a system exists is taken for granted, and it is not clear where the evolution of new systems of land tenure should originate. The assumption is also made here that land tenure implies a similar system of tenure regarding other land resources. As has been demonstrated in preceding sections, this is not necessarily the case. Moreover, resource degradation is not a tenure problem, but rather a socio-economic, political and ecological problem that is firmly rooted in colonial land distribution.

The misconception of the "resource problem" has a long history in southern Africa. Beinart (1984) maintains that:

"... there is a strong conservationist tradition in southern Africa that is anything but progressive. It

may have been so in the early 20th century when it was first applied to the 'soil mining' of settler farmers concerned with short-term profit in a context of seeming land abundance, but as it came to be more applied to analyzing problems of African peasant areas it took the form of an idiom [that] ...has too often been employed to put the blame on African peasant cultivators for problems really created by unjust land division."

Cliffe (1986:49) aptly states this position thus:

"...[the conservationist approach] wrongly specifies the 'problem',...it mistakenly explains the causes, and thus the solutions that flow from it are inappropriate and have the wrong emphasis. Moreover, these misperceptions are not just a consequence of some residual colonial values that happen to have survived unexpurgated from white settler attitudes to mar slightly a basically sound technical appraisal. Rather this whole school suffers from a flawed and mystifying way of thinking about environmental issues..."

This, of course, is not to say there is no resource degradation problem per se in the communal areas; there is. It however points to the fundamental cause of the problem, land distribution, so that all efforts to solve this resource degradation problem necessarily have to be predicated on a radical solution to the land problem if they are to succeed in the long term. Thus without land redistribution, spontaneous settlement in the marginal Zambezi valley ecosystem will continue until the C.As there can absorb no more settlers, by then the wildlife and forestry resources will have been degraded to a stage where sustainable utilization will be well nigh impossible, and settlement will definitely turn to the National Parks and Forestry areas within this area. The CAMPFIRE programme is not even remotely likely to stop this encroachment in the absence of land reform. ✓

That the peasants have always had a radically different perception of the reality of their situation than the normative "official" perception of successive administrations is also demonstrated by the various strategies they adopted of subverting state ownership and control of natural resources. The expropriation of land consisted of the substitution of state for local ownership of hitherto communal resources. Thus land in the Reserves became state land, held in trust for the state by some representative of the tribe (the chief, who was also a state agent) through the Tribal Trust Land Act. Similarly, the King's Game Act, The Natural Resources Act, the Forestry Act and the National Parks and Wildlife Act, have all in succession been aimed at instituting state control of the natural resources of the communal areas. The peasant reaction to state ownership has always been subversion. ✓

Subversion initially took the form of breaking down fences to graze livestock on private freehold and state land in response to the dis-incentives - destocking, overcrowding, etc. - to stock raising in the Reserves. This form of subversion also includes the illegal exploitation of other natural resources such as hunting and trapping of animals, cutting down trees and fishing and has continued into post-independence times. The CAMPFIRE programme is in part aimed at resolving some of these problems by involving local communities in the management of state owned resources such as wildlife and forestry. ✓

Subversion of state ownership took a more striking form after independence when the collapse of the colonial state was perceived by the peasants to signify the disintegration of all colonial land and natural resources legislation as well. Thus there was a dramatic increase in the incidence of 'spontaneous settlement' on both state land and the former white commercial farmland. The new government was slow to react to this strategy, essentially because of their own obligation to land redistribution, which had been a major contention of the liberation struggle. However, after the start of the resettlement programme, 'spontaneous settlement' was branded 'squatting' and the state moved in to evict these 'squatters' from all illegal settlements. However, the sluggish pace at which the resettlement programme has progressed, the fact that most of the resettlement has occurred in natural regions iii and iv, as well as the failure to provide security of tenure equal to that obtaining in the C.As, has meant a preference for spontaneous settlement to resettlement.

Cheater (1989) observes that: "The state has used the resettlement programme to acquire land from the freehold sector and to cancel title to it, presumably achieving two different ideological goals simultaneously: state ownership of the means of production, and decommunitisation of land in line with the 'communal' landholding model....The clear preference has been to lay claim on vacant, non-state land, rather than to be resettled." Bratton (1986:191) adds that "[A]lthough many proficient farmers want more land, they also want firmer property guarantees than the government is willing to provide."

In my view, this form of subversion, 'spontaneous settlement' or 'squatting', as well as peasant reluctance to be resettled, represent a continuance of the preference for the 'peasant option'. The 'peasants' are determined to maintain their property rights in land and natural resources in the face of state intervention that is targeted to erode any such rights. Given also that the ideological perception of 'communal' tenure has remained basically unchanged, Government intervention has also basically continued to attempt to superimpose a 'communal' model that does not necessarily correspond to the de facto landholding practices and production strategies of the 'communal' areas.

The "communal" land tenure system has thus proven to be flexible and has changed to accommodate changes in the economic

environment. Individual rights in land have begun to take precedence over group rights in land, with the result that the tenure system itself can no longer be seen as simply "communal" in the sense of group rights in land.

Having thus traced the historical origins of resource degradation in the C.As to the establishment of the colonial state and the imposition of colonial ideology on peasant rationality, I turn now to the question of the current status of CPRs in the C.As with a view to identifying a possible analytical framework for policy solutions to CPR management problems. In the foregoing sections, I focused my attention on the political causes of the degradation of both arable land and CPRs. In this section, I intend to also focus on wildlife and forestry in the C.As on the one hand and grazing on the other as I believe that these constitute somewhat different CPR regimes as a result of their different modes of articulation into the colonial state, and also because current attempts to address some of the perceived resource problems of the C.As have focused mainly on these resources.

The Implications of 'Communal' Tenure for Sustainable Common Property Resource Management: The Need For Radical Agrarian Reform.

"For agricultural workers, little gardens and potato plots; for the town workers sanitary improvements and the like - such is their programme. It is an excellent sign that the bourgeoisie are already obliged to sacrifice their own classical economic theory, partly from political considerations but partly because they themselves owing to the practical consequences of this theory, have begun to doubt it. The same thing is proved by the growth of professorial Socialism [Kathedersozialismus] which in one form or another is more and more supplanting political economy. The actual contradictions engendered by the mode of production have become so glaring that no theory can conceal them any longer, unless it were this professorial socialist mishmash, which, however, is no longer a theory but drivel.

.....Their socialism is municipal socialism; not the nation but the municipality is to become the owner of the means of production". K.Marx and F.Engels: On Britain (pp519 and 532)

Shopo (1984:16) notes that there is a need to redefine the sense of community beyond petty projects of municipal socialism to the level of structural transformation at the highest level of the state to bring about more effective participation in development by the people.

"Such an agenda would not be premised on attempting to solve the crisis of world capitalist accumulation... but would revolve around the principle that development is for the

people. The most important index of accountability will therefore be popular participation. In operational terms, popular participation means procedural and structural mechanisms to enhance the managerial and productive capacities of rural workers and peasants and to create opportunities to devise and develop alternative income generating activities, to provide an institutionalised process of giving the rural poor a better chance in reaping the benefits of development programmes, and to provide a process and method for people to bargain with development agencies."

In announcing the decentralization of the Local Government system in Zimbabwe, the [then] Prime Minister announced that the intention was to bring about:

"a comprehensive and more effective system of involving the local communities both horizontally and vertically in the process of planning and effecting their development, thus enabling Government to assess the development needs and priorities not only of the provinces but also of the district, ward and village areas within the province" Provincial Governorship of Zimbabwe (1984).

Thus the participation of the rural population in development should not be limited to the people sharing in the distribution of the benefits of development, it requires that they also share in the task of creating these benefits. //

How then, are local rural communities to be involved in the development of their own areas? Does such involvement have any implications for sustainable CPR management in particular and land reform generally? Two programmes have so far been instituted in the C.As whose success is predicated on the participation of communities in the management of CPRs - The Grazing schemes and CAMPFIRE programmes. Focus in this paper will be on the CAMPFIRE programme as the grazing schemes are sufficiently dealt with in Cousins (1990)

Before addressing the issue of CPR management and implications for land reform, it is imperative that the distinguishing features of the CPR regime in question, i.e. the property relations existing between people who are co-users of a specific CPR, be specified. This, of course, requires an in-depth analysis of property relations which is not the purpose of this paper. For a fuller discussion see e.g. Cousins (1990). Nonetheless a brief outline of the relations governing access to grazing, wildlife and forestry will be undertaken here.

Property is an enforceable right of a person/s to some use or benefit of some thing (i.e. a political relationship between persons). It is not that thing to which the right refers. For MacPherson (1983:1): "The meaning of property is not constant. The actual institution, and the way people see it, change over

time... The changes are related to changes in the purposes which society or the dominant classes in society expect the institution to serve." Thus since property is a man-made institution, it is made and maintained/changed to serve some specific purpose, so that people's perceptions of that purpose define for them the nature of the property institution. Property then, is a dynamic institution.

MacPherson distinguishes three types of property - common property, private property and state property.

"Common property is created by the guarantee to each individual that he will not be excluded from the use or benefit of something; private property is created by the guarantee that an individual can exclude others from the use or benefit of something. Both kinds of property, being guarantees to individual persons, are individual rights. ... State property ... consists of rights which the state has not only created but has kept for itself or has taken over from private individuals or corporations. ... State property..., is a corporate right to exclude. As a corporate right to exclude others it fits the definition of corporate private property." (1983:3).

In Marx's view, property as an institution is the product of the class relations of production and refers to the ownership of the means of production. Property relations are thus determined by the mode of production which creates them, since every mode of production is characterised by its own relations of production (different modes of production, from different historical epochs, can coexist but the dominant mode of production determines the relations of production of that epoch).

What then, is the property institution regarding the "common property resources" of the C.As? Let us consider wildlife, forestry and grazing in turn.

There can be no doubt that in pre-colonial times, wildlife, forestry and grazing were regulated by some form of common property regime. What would be contentious though is the identification of the specific institutional arrangements that evolved to regulate the utilization of these resources. Colonial constructions of 'communal' tenure ensured that grazing and forest land in the Reserves remained part of the common property regime by creating chiefly and ward (dunhu) territories to regulate access. State ownership was assumed over wildlife in the Reserves, on private freehold land and on state land and forest resources outside the Reserves and private freehold land.

Wholesale utilization of wildlife for commercial purposes came from European hunters and adventurers of the 1300s who shot wild animals, particularly elephant for ivory, on an unprecedented scale. Historical studies have documented the contributory role played by the hunters and adventurers in paving the way for colonial penetration (vide e.g Bhila 1982). It was not until the

early 1900s that colonial governments started assuming control over wildlife and wildlife resources through the promulgation of legislation designed to regulate wildlife utilization. Based on a conservation and preservation rationale, the assumption of state control consisted of the delineation of game reserves and expropriating all private rights to wildlife, both within and without the game reserves. It was in this way that wildlife in "British Africa" became the 'King's Game' (Graham 1973). This trend has continued and state ownership is still the basis of wildlife utilization in Zimbabwe. Wildlife utilization on private property (freehold area), 'communal' land and state land is regulated by the National Parks and Wildlife Management Act of 1975. Under this Act, the state is the sole proprietor of all wildlife and wildlife products on all land in Zimbabwe. Thus wildlife in the C.As is not part of the CPR regime, it is state property. ✓

Illegal utilization of wildlife and degradation of the resource inevitably resulted from the assumption of state control which effectively precluded the emergence of local regulation of utilization. The encroachment of grazing and arable agriculture on wildlife areas is also probably going to start occurring as a result of the same phenomenon, as well as of the need for agricultural land in response to pressure in the C.As. ✓

The CAMPFIRE programme, as has been seen above, is designed to solve the "problems of communally owned resources". To date, The main thrust of CAMPFIRE has been in the direction of involving local communities in the management of the wildlife resources of their areas in the face of increasing poaching, the department of National Parks and Wildlife Management's increasing inability to monitor and police utilization in the C.As, and the increasing threat of encroachment of the National Parks as land shortages in the C.As become more acute. This objective (of bringing state property under a CPR regime) is to be achieved by the devolution of 'Appropriate Authority' to manage wildlife to the District Councils in the C.As terms of the NPWM Act of 1975. Under this programme, those District Councils with appropriate authority are empowered to make decisions regarding the utilization of revenues earned from the exploitation of wildlife in their constituencies. On leasehold land, the landholder is empowered to utilise the wildlife on that land in accordance with the provisions of the same Act. Wildlife, however, remains state property.

To approach the wildlife management problems in the C.As in this way is both superficial and based on a conceptual and operational fallacy concerning the nature of the property regime governing the resource. The way to approach the problem seems rather to be to conceptualise the effects of state ownership on both utilization and management and attempt to identify appropriate solutions.

Taylor (1987), writing on some of the potential problems for the implementation of CAMPFIRE, states that:

"For most local inhabitants, ownership of a wildlife resource, or indeed other natural resources, is conceptually difficult to perceive. It is a resource which has always been part of the environment, to be exploited when needed or else viewed as a problem..." It would seem here that Taylor is ignoring the effect of state ownership of wildlife on the perceptions of that property institution by the 'local inhabitants', and the local forms of utilization of that same resource (e.g. poaching), which are probably a consciously adopted strategy to subvert state ownership of a previously common property resource. The very existence of a property regime means that people's rights and obligations regarding that thing to which the right pertains are defined, and the people involved become subject to the resultant property relations, and that, therefore, their concept of the thing is a function of these property relations. In MacPherson's words (1983:1): "How people see the thing [property]...that is, what concept they have of it... is both cause and effect of what it is at any time." (my emphasis).

Bromley and Cernea (1988) note the role of the dissolution of local - level CPR management institutions through the imposition of state ownership in resource degradation.

"Resource degradation in developing countries, while incorrectly attributed to 'common property resources', actually originates 'in the dissolution of local institutional arrangements whose very purpose was to give rise to resource use patterns that were sustainable. The dissolution of local institutional arrangements arose from a combination of powerful rulers at some remove from the village, colonial administration, and the rise of the nation state. National governments have not replaced these former resource management regimes." (my emphasis)

Bromley and Cernea are advocating a return to common property regimes based on the utility of such regimes in sustainable resource management and the failure of state management. The CAMPFIRE programme also suggests the creation of a common property regime for the sustainable management of natural resources in the C.A's. It points to the need to "provide the appropriate institutions under which resources can be legitimately managed and exploited by the resident communities for their own benefit" and to "introduce a new system of group ownership and territorial rights to natural resources for the communities resident in the target areas". Martin (1986). This is the course that the implementation of the programme is taking, though the creation of viable local management institutions is likely to be realised only in the long term given the long history of state ownership. But how is this conclusion reached in the CAMPFIRE programme given that it takes as its point of departure the inability of 'communal' tenure to sustainably

manage natural resources? Perhaps this apparent gap points further to the need for a comprehensive conceptual framework within which solutions for resource management problems should be sought.

That local resource management institutions atrophy as a result of the assumption of state control over the resources, resulting in unregulated utilization and resource degradation is also demonstrated by Lawry (1989). He makes the observation that state control results in local institutions losing their legal rights to control local resource use at the same time as the state - because of logistical limitations of staff and funding - is unable to put effective management systems in place. The emergence of local solutions to future resource management problems is also effectively forestalled in the process. "...the state's principal objective in centralising control [is] to assert its political authority over local interests, not to impose new resource management regimes. States have concentrated their regulatory efforts on individual users, not on local user groups." Lawry (1989:5; my emphasis).

It thus emerges that the solution for resource problems in the communal areas lies in the development of an institutional framework by which defined user groups can regulate resource utilization and exclude non-users from the benefits of their common resources. As Lawry (1988:13) states; "the devolution of greater management control to local user-groups is a broadly desirable policy goal". Such a strategy however has some fundamental implications for land reform that will need to be addressed urgently.

Ciriacy-Wantrup and Bishop (1972:713) point out that common property resource management institutions (either in the form of constituted bodies or sets of rules and regulations) have historically always existed and played beneficial roles in resource conservation. Such institutions also promise to be central to solutions of today's pressing resource problems.

Scoones and Wilson (1989:108) note that one of the problems in increasing common property resources management, in this case grazing management, is the issue of land rights.

"Prior to instituting grazing regimes the issue of exclusive land rights has to be dealt with. Existing land rights involve a diffuse pattern of overlapping rights, including those of land spirits, chiefs, ward heads, village heads, local patrilineage heads and individual homesteads. Rights at any level never fully exclude rights at another level."

Research has demonstrated that the existence of this diffuse system of land rights has precluded the emergence of any strong land management units, at least in the nineteenth century, (vide Scoones and Wilson 1989; Mukamuri 1987) contrary to Holleman's (1951) assertion that "wards (matunhu) were the basic units of land management among the Shona..." Wards are constantly changing

due to a dynamic process of boundary renegotiation and Scoones and Wilson (1989) warn that the fact that they are considered by rural people, especially among chiefly lineages, to be administrative units of land, is not necessarily proof that they are resource management units.

The development of CPR institutions is related to and determined by the patterns of resource use. Scoones And Wilson (1989) demonstrate that resource use in the C.As tends to be confined to areas around people's villages, rather than to be extended ward wide. Because of the local interests in neighbourhood resources, an overlap in interest in the wider community context is inevitable. This explains why no groups are generally in a position to claim exclusive tenure of CPRs and hence the preclusion of the emergence of strong resource management units.

Attention has however tended to focus mostly on the development of grazing institutions. The fact that the Shona by the 19th century were no longer predominantly pastoralist but rather involved in sedentary agro - pastoralism could mean that such institutions did in fact exist during the pastoralist times but had atrophied as a result of the changes in the production system.

The pastoralist Ndebele developed a system of transhumance, (lagisa), in response to grazing shortage in the reserves. This institution still exists to regulate the use of rangeland among the Ndebele. (For more detailed discussion of lagisa see e.g. Prescott 1961; Scoones and Wilson 1989).

In the context of the contemporary crisis in grazing management in the C.As, Cousins (1987) observes that: "Grazing schemes have been widely promoted ...as a means of addressing a perceived resource conservation problem. .. These schemes are designed as common property regimes" However, Cousins notes that grazing schemes are confounded by all sorts of conflicts, particularly in their attempts to exclude potential users.

Thus while the need for some institutional arrangement to manage CPRs in the C.As is clear, this would necessarily be predicated on the need to develop systems of land rights that would be conducive to the development of such institutions. It follows that the extent to which a "community" can establish an enforceable degree of exclusivity in resource use is an important consideration. This would entail creating new property regimes and specifying the rights of users in each regime to the exclusion of other potential users.

Lawry (1989:18) points out some important considerations in instituting local CPR management:

1. Common property management schemes must incorporate clear incentives for individual participation. The distribution of common property benefits in relation to individual labour and other contributions must be clear from the beginning.

2. Communities will welcome devolution of authority, particularly where it gives them preferential rights in relation to others.

3. The most effective management systems will emerge out of collaborative arrangements, where the state provides technical assistance and assists in the enforcement of rules agreed to by a credible local institution.

The decentralisation of local government in 1984 provides us with a viable starting point in the search for viable CPR management institutions. Decentralization resulted in the creation of VIDCOs and WADCOs in each District area, each with clearly defined geographic and demographic boundaries. The Communal Land Act 1982 vests all land authority in the C.As with the District Council which in turn has delegated the authority to allocate land to the VIDCOs and WADCOs. The extent to which these lower tier institutions have been able to dispense this function is an open question since they have found themselves in the throes of a mighty conflict with other existing institutions at that level who want to assert their own authority over land - the chiefs, sabhuku, etc.- especially regarding allocation. (vide Murombedzi (1987) for detailed discussion on the development of VIDCOs and WADCOs).

These lower tier institutions do not have any legal status. It is imperative that they should be legally empowered into land and resource management institutions if they are to be the basis for local institutional development. Moreover, as currently constituted, VIDCOs and WADCOs are not resource utilization units, neither do they correspond in any way to resource use patterns in their areas (which often cut across ward and village boundaries and are part of the reason for the constant boundary renegotiation). Nonetheless VIDCOs and WADCOs have the potential to cut across the diffuse and overlapping land rights systems to create unitary regulatory units.

What is envisaged is a system where the VIDCO is the basic land holding unit with regulatory functions over the definition, delineation and access to all CPRs within its boundaries, with the WADCO functioning to regulate "key" CPRs access to which would be ward wide, or at least would not be exclusive to a single VIDCO, depending on geographic and ecological attributes of the resource in question. Such a system would need to develop out of a process of local consultation to delineate boundaries and determine access.

However, the exclusion of potential users is problematic. The enclosure of grazing is already occurring in regions ii and iii in which the poorer households are losing access to CPRs. Given also the nature and extent of differentiation in the C.As. some decision must be made regarding users and non-users. The case for land reform having to consider the natural region in which it is located is made by Ushewokunze (1990). It should also be added

here that land reform in the communal areas must be instructed by the strategies and choices that have been adopted by the peasants in each C.A.

Moreover, a decision has to be made about the objectives of any agrarian reform programme, between the economic objective of increasing output and the pursuit of social justice by ensuring equitable access to communal land. It would seem though, that land reform after 1990 will take the form of accelerated resettlement to achieve the goal of social justice. As stated in the ZANU (PF) election Manifesto for the 1990 General Elections:

"The Party and Government will soon be introducing the Land Acquisition Bill in Parliament which will give Government more power to acquire more land for resettlement wherever and whenever it is acquired. The President and First Secretary, ..., has made it abundantly clear that land must be given to those who till it and need it for food production. He will not brook any interference or criticism in pursuing the goal of equitable distribution of the land."

Thus land will be acquired from the large scale freehold sector and redistributed to relieve pressure on the communal lands. There is a definite limit to the amount of redistribution that can satisfy land hunger and it goes without saying that what is also needed is the accelerated generation of non-agricultural employment to reduce the agricultural population. (see Moyo 1990).

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